

Nahum

The Twelve Minor Prophets · Biblical Prophets

Nahum the Elkoshite prophesied against Nineveh approximately a century after Jonah's preaching had prompted the city's temporary repentance.

Note: The contrast between Jonah and Nahum illustrates both divine attributes: God's mercy extends to repentant Gentiles (Jonah), yet persistent wickedness ultimately exhausts patience (Nahum). Assyrian brutality was legendary—their own monuments boast of flaying enemies alive, impaling captives, building pyramids of severed heads, and deporting entire populations. Nineveh's fall in 612 BC to combined Babylonian-Median forces was so complete that Greek historians centuries later doubted the city had existed. Sir Austen Henry Layard's 1840s excavations near Mosul, Iraq, rediscovered the city and Ashurbanipal's massive library, vindicating biblical accuracy.

The Assyrian capital had returned to its brutal ways, becoming the most feared empire of the ancient world. Nahum's oracle—"the burden of Nineveh"—proclaimed the city's certain, irreversible destruction. While Jonah emphasized God's mercy to repentant sinners, Nahum reveals that mercy exhausted becomes judgment executed. The prophet's vivid imagery depicts attacking armies, flashing swords, galloping horses, and Nineveh's fall as divine vengeance for centuries of atrocities. Yet the message comforts Judah: 'The LORD is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him.' Nineveh fell to the Babylonians and Medes in 612 BC, exactly as prophesied, and was so thoroughly destroyed that its location was lost until archaeological excavation in the nineteenth century.

Key Verses

Nahum 1:2-3

God is jealous, and the LORD revengeth; the LORD revengeth, and is furious; the LORD will take vengeance on his adversaries, and he reserveth wrath for his

enemies. The LORD is slow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked.

Nahum 1:7

The LORD is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him.

Nahum 1:15

Behold upon the mountains the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace! O Judah, keep thy solemn feasts, perform thy vows: for the wicked shall no more pass through thee; he is utterly cut off.

Nahum 3:19

There is no healing of thy bruise; thy wound is grievous: all that hear the bruit of thee shall clap the hands over thee: for upon whom hath not thy wickedness passed continually?

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